

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY OF CROSSLAKE  
THURSDAY, JULY 6, 2023  
5:30 P.M. – CITY HALL

The Council for the City of Crosslake held a Special Meeting on Thursday, July 6, 2023. The following Council Members were present: Mayor Dave Nevin, Aaron Herzog, Jackson Purfeerst, Sandy Farder, and Marcia Seibert-Volz. Also in attendance were City Administrator Mike Lyonais, City Clerk Char Nelson, Fire Chief Chip Lohmiller, Public Works Director Pat Wehner, and Police Sergeant Jake Maier. There were seven people in the audience.

Dave Nevin called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

Aaron Herzog stated that the Crosslake Fire Department protects 2.4 billion dollars of property value, which is the largest in the County. Mr. Herzog stated that he sees a need for a fulltime Fire Chief, noting that there were 2 false alarm fire calls today where many firefighters responded. The City must pay those that respond, even if it is a false alarm. Mr. Herzog stated that these nuisance calls could be handled by a fulltime Fire Chief, who could call for backup if there was a true emergency. Sandy Farder asked if a specific group of firefighters could be assigned to a shift rather than everyone responding. Chip Lohmiller stated that they only have Duty Crews at night because during the day, they never know who would be available or tied up at work. Mr. Lohmiller stated that so far this year, the City has paid \$10,000-\$13,000 on these types of calls, which include lift assists.

Aaron Herzog stated that the shared Emergency Manager position will now be solely Chip Lohmiller because the Police Chief is retiring. It will take the new Chief several years of training to be able to share that position with Mr. Lohmiller. The Police Department is down two employees, so Mr. Herzog stated that it would not be a convenient time to send the new Police Chief to training. Parade detail, COVID precautions, and notification of severe weather are some of the items Mr. Lohmiller has worked on in this regard.

Aaron Herzog stated that the fulltime Fire Chief would perform inspections of the short-term rentals and would work with businesses to make sure they are in compliance with sprinkler systems and occupancy load.

Dave Nevin stated that many of the firefighters are getting burned out. Chip Lohmiller replied that the call volume is up and the number of staff is the same. Aaron Herzog stated that there is now a shortage of ambulance drivers. Chip Lohmiller reported that the ambulance was not in town when a heart attack call came in and 9 firefighters responded to the call. It took all 9 of them to give CPR until the ambulance arrived. Dave Nevin asked how the City could retain firefighters. Chip Lohmiller stated that the shortage of firefighters is a problem across the whole state.

Jackson Purfeerst asked about the Relief Association and how much the State gives toward the retirement account. Mike Lyonais explained how a percentage of insurance rates is given to the State and a portion of that is given back to the fire relief associations.

Chip Lohmiller stated that a fulltime Fire Chief could expand community outreach, public education, evacuation plans, and work with businesses. A discussion ensued regarding the number of calls and wages compared to area cities, benefits, and training. Sandy Farder stated that the Council can't undervalue the safety of the community and should realize the value of having an employee that cares about his job. Jackson Purfeerst stated that the Council should go back to paying the Fire Chief a monthly stipend and that he is not in favor of offering a salary higher than \$62,500. Mr. Purfeerst added that he is not in favor of a fulltime Fire Chief at this time. Marcia Seibert-Volz stated that she is not in support of ever having a fulltime Fire Chief. Dave Nevin stated that he wants to support the Fire Department and that he is not opposed to having a fulltime Fire Chief but that he is nervous about how it could evolve.

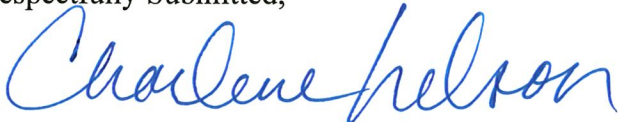
MOTION 07SP1-01-23 WAS MADE BY AARON HERZOG AND SECONDED BY SANDY FARDER TO HAVE THE POSITION OF FULLTIME FIRE CHIEF IN CROSSLAKE AND TO APPOINT CHIP LOHMILLER TO THIS POSITION. MOTION CARRIED 3-2 WITH PURFEERST AND SEIBERT-VOLZ OPPOSED.

Jerry Volz of 37668 Moen Beach Trail stated that the Council should put this question on the ballot and let the people decide whether they want a fulltime Fire Chief or not.

MOTION 07SP1-02-23 WAS MADE BY DAVE NEVIN AND SECONDED BY JACKSON PURFEERST TO DIRECT THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO OBTAIN SALARY INFORMATION REGARDING FULLTIME FIRE CHIEF POSITION. MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL AYES.

MOTION 07SP1-03-23 WAS MADE BY JACKSON PURFEERST AND SECONDED BY SANDY FARDER TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:05 P.M. MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL AYES.

Respectfully Submitted,



Charlene Nelson  
City Clerk